



Eastern Arizona Type II Incident Management Team

103 Fire

May 31, 2006 7:00 p.m.

Acres: 2,050 Containment: 95% Cause: Human, under investigation
Personnel: 364 Fire Crews: 7 {6 Type 1, 1 Type 2} Helicopters: 4

Shifting Emphasis

Mop-up efforts (suppression of hot spots) are now the focus of firefighters on the line. Crews are extinguishing all embers for a distance of 5 chains (a chain is 66 feet) in from the fire perimeter. On Thursday, June 1, management of the fire will be transferred to a local Type III organization. Full containment is expected on June 2 at 6:00 a.m.

A Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team has been assigned to the incident, to mitigate downstream effects of the fire such as flooding and erosion. Overall, the fire was fast-moving and did not burn at a high level of severity, which means benefits to the landscape. Fire historically moved through southwestern mountain ranges, removing dead vegetation and debris, and recycling nutrients in the form of ash left behind. Conversely, a severe wildfire will kill vegetation and with it the roots which function as anchors to hold soil in place. "Generally, the fire did not burn at a high level of severity," stated BAER Team Leader Bob Lefevre. "Most of the trees and grasses are not dead, and will grow vigorously when the rains come."

The evaluation of fire effects is being jointly conducted by the Coronado National Forest and the Coronado National Memorial, as the burn occurred on lands administered by both agencies. The current concerns are for Forest Road 61 which travels over Montezuma Pass, and parts of the Arizona Trail, as in some locations significant damage was sustained. The BAER Team is considering replacing or repairing and cleaning out culverts beneath the road to carry increased runoff should it occur. They are assessing possible treatments to help stabilize the Arizona Trail.

For further information please call the Sierra Vista Ranger District office at (520) 378-0311 or the Coronado National Forest public affairs office at (520) 388-8343.

This is the final update from the Eastern Arizona Incident Management Team on the 103 Fire.

